

DARKWING DUCK

A 22-minute Comedy Action Series About a Family.
Of Superheroes.
Who are Ducks.

Series Proposal by Francisco Angones, Matt Youngberg, and Suzanna Olson

LOGLINE: What if you found out your corny, over-the-top father was Batman?

In the fine children's programming tradition of *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, *Kim Possible...* and FX's *The Americans*.

FAMILY CAN GET DANGEROUS. BUT FAMILY SAVES THE DAY.

This show is about a father, a daughter, and a Launchpad, as they become each other's heroes and discover that family is what you make it. Together they'll learn that family are the people you fight side-by-side with, you fight against, and you fight for, no matter how dangerous things get.



The Mallards are a thoroughly modern family. Millennial single parent Drake does his best to raise his rebellious adopted daughter Gosalyn and balance his need to be an authoritative parent and his desire to be a "cool dad." This embarrasses fiercely independent Gosalyn to no end. Finding her place at her new school is hard enough without trying to figure out how she fits into her weird new family. It doesn't help that Drake's doting best friend/roommate Launchpad has crashed the car into the cafeteria every time he's dropped her off.

They may seem unconventional, but the Mallards spend their days laughing, bickering, teasing, caring for each other, supporting each other, testing each other, and generally trying to survive. Just like most families.

Their nights are a different matter...

Because they live in the Supercrime Capital of Calisota: ST. CANARD! A city where every bad guy has an elaborate gimmick, every science experiment ends in an explosion and a declaration of revenge. Supervillainy reigns supreme and not even the most intrepid heroes are daring enough (or foolhardy enough) to stand up to it.

Luckily for the citizens of St. Canard, the Mallards have a secret. They are a family of masked defenders, sworn to protect the city and expose the dark conspiracies of the criminal underworld. **It's this family of underdogs against the world. And no matter how difficult family life can get, they always manage to come together and fight crime.**

For they are the terrors that flap in the night! They are the roller skate at the base of villainy's staircase! They...

...have to make two hundred cookies for the school bake sale tomorrow?! But the Liquidator is on the loose! Why didn't Gosalyn tell anyone sooner? What do you mean, "It was on the calendar"?!

SAVING THE DAY... AND EACH OTHER.



Darkwing Duck is a show about a group of loners that are forced to come together to form a surrogate family that saves the day as they save each other. **We follow the family's misadventures through Gosalyn's POV**, as she chronicles her life as an adolescent hero and adopted daughter of the virtuous but vain vigilante known as Darkwing Duck.

The superheroic stories serve as a backdrop to highlight and emphasize the dangers and pitfalls of trying to be a "normal family". How can Gosalyn figure out who she wants to be as a person when she's currently balancing multiple identities? Can she maintain her edgy reputation with her showboating dad in a purple cape fighting some embarrassing clown called "Quackerjack"? How can Drake push Gosalyn to be more friendly and outgoing at school when he's constantly fighting

with fellow hero Gizmoduck? Will Drake and Gosalyn be able to sneak off and foil plant-villain Bushroot without ruining Launchpad's lovingly planned family bonding cookout?

Gosalyn, Drake, and Launchpad are used to being overlooked. As an orphan, Gosalyn was forced to grow up a little faster than other kids her age and learn to take care of herself. Meanwhile, Drake is a little immature for his age; he's an image-conscious "lone vigilante" who's looking to make a name for himself as a hero, but his ego keeps getting in the way. Having lived life on the fringes of the epic McDuck Family, Launchpad has always felt like a bit of an outsider and is eager to start a family of his own. Individually, no one ever thought these three could amount to much. But together, they could be heroes.

Drake is the grandstanding hero who thinks that he's the star of the show. Gosalyn is the improviser who's constantly throwing Drake off his carefully scripted heroic narrative to get results, and Launchpad hasn't read the script but is just happy to be part of the show. But when things get dangerous, they set aside their differences because they're heroes, and they're family.

These are three unrelated individuals used to being on their own in need of finding something bigger to care about than themselves. That "something bigger" comes both in the form of a heroic quest to save the city and in actually coming to care for each other as a family.

When times are tough and it feels like the whole wicked world is against you, you'll find you're never alone because **FAMILY SAVES THE DAY**.



SECRET ORIGINS: THE SETUP

Although they're posing as a regular family, the Mallards are clearly anything but, as is proven by their origins. Gosalyn's beloved grandfather (and caretaker) was brilliant inventor/scientist Thaddeus Waddlemeyer. When Waddlemeyer went missing during a mysterious lab accident, Gosalyn was placed in an orphanage.. Forced to grow up a little too early, driven Gosalyn snuck out of the orphanage nightly to try to find clues about her grandfather's disappearance.

During one particularly tense stakeout, just as she's about to get a crucial piece of information, Gosalyn's investigation is stymied by grandstanding, speechifying caped crusader DARKWING DUCK!

After much arguing while evading and defeating a villainous gang, Darkwing and Gosalyn realize they need each other.. Darkwing is the only other person who actually believes Waddlemeyer's disappearance was no accident and can get Gosalyn out of the orphanage permanently. It's nice to have someone believe in her and support her, no matter how off-the-wall her notions are. And by keeping her close, Darkwing can protect Gosalyn from villains out to do her harm as she helps him solve the case. Plus it feels good to have someone to talk to on patrol; constantly monologuing to himself was making him a little crazy. After spending so much time fighting losing battles alone, these two realize they're so much stronger together.

Darkwing just has to get her to stop referring to him as her "sidekick". That's why he calls in his old buddy from Duckburg, Launchpad, to be *his* sidekick. After all, Darkwing can't *be* a sidekick if he *has* a sidekick, right?

But in order to help each other without rousing suspicion, they'll have to undertake the most dangerous undercover assignment of all: posing as a believable family. As they play their parts, fight crime, and close in on the Waddlemeyer mystery, "**The Mallards**" **may go from pretending to be family to actually becoming one.**

DARING DUCKS OF MYSTERY



GOSALYN WADDLEMEYER MALLARD AKA QUIVERWING (12) The Brains. Driven, enthusiastic, independent, and proudly weird. Katniss Everdeen crossed with Kate McKinnon.

No one has ever really understood Gosalyn. Raising her in a lab, Gosalyn's genius grandfather always taught her she can do anything "with a couple of spare parts, a little ingenuity, and a ton of spirit." Although she never took the time to actually learn the science, Gosalyn is a natural engineer, always building makeshift gadgets, and a gifted improviser. She once disassembled the fridge to supercharge a thermos. The rest of the food went bad overnight, but the lemonade in that thermos stayed cold for a solid month! Gosalyn was always more interested in "effect" than "cause." Until her grandfather mysteriously disappeared.

In the orphanage, she gained a reputation as the odd girl constantly taking apart appliances and causing mysterious bathroom explosions. She's tried to wall herself off from what other people think, but she hears every critique and insult behind her back. Gosalyn manages to distract herself by breaking out of the orphanage and throwing herself fully into finding her grandfather. If the other kids won't accept her, maybe he will. He was the only person who always understood Gosalyn...until Drake.

At first glance, Drake and Gosalyn should not go together at all. **She's a mature for her age, Generation Z kid. He's an immature for his age millennial parent. (They end up meeting somewhere in the middle.)**

He's image-obsessed, she's proudly weird. He's preppy, she's rough around the edges. He plans every entrance for maximum dramatic impact, she bursts in blindly and figures it out as she goes along. He's form ("I made a motorcycle that looks like my face! It does *not* run.") and she's function ("I rigged a tricycle to break the sound barrier.")

But Gosalyn actually finds an unlikely ally in Drake. This ego-centric showboat is the only other person who believes her wild stories about her missing grandfather. **They also both share the same boundless determination.** No matter how bad a situation gets, they both believe they'll somehow pull it out in the end: Drake because of his ego, Gosalyn because she's a quick-thinking survivor. They're both blessed with an indomitable spirit.

Gosalyn's going to need every last ounce of that spirit to survive being a "family". She doesn't understand why they have to put up the appearance of being a normal family when they should be spending day and night searching for clues. Why are they wasting time with school and friends and trips to Ikea? She's constantly almost blowing the family's cover. She even sees any crime that isn't connected to her grandfather's disappearance as a waste of time.

She certainly doesn't care for the costumed persona Darkwing's trying to foist on her: QUIVERWING, the avian archer with the trick arrows! It all feels a little ridiculous to her, but she'll go along with it. Partially because she wants to get Drake to take her out on patrol, and partially...because she actually cares about him. Huh. That's weird.

At the age were kids are struggling to figure out their identities, Gosalyn has to sort out THREE. Is she heroic kid crimefighter Quiverwing, out for justice? Inventor's granddaughter Gosalyn Waddlemeyer, missing her grandfather and driven for vengeance? Or Gosalyn Mallard, trying to figure out how to act like a "typical suburban kid"? How did the girl who supposedly doesn't care what anyone thinks of her end up having to convince people of MULTIPLE SECRET IDENTITIES? Maybe being a part of this unconventional so-called "family" will help her figure out who she actually is.



DRAKE MALLARD AKA DARKWING (30s) The Mouth. Dad by day, vigilante by night. What if Jason Bateman was Batman?

As a kid, scrawny Drake Mallard was constantly bullied. Until one day he discovered an old TV show about a purple-caped vigilante. This hero never backed down, no matter how much danger he was in. Drake still got picked on, but this hero inspired him to get back up and fight for what's right.

Flash forward to the present, where down-on-his-luck actor Drake is looking for a new purpose: He's going to become a superhero in real life! He's doing it partially to protect the downtrodden like himself, partially to stick it to everyone who ever made fun of him.

With the heart of a hero, the ego of an actor, and no idea what he's doing, Drake gets beat up, blown up, and generally abused, but always gets back up to fight for what's right. **You love to see Darkwing get hurt because it's funny, but you want to see him win because he'll never back down in the name of justice.** He's the only superhero who carries a headshot, and his flashy gadgets, vehicles, and headquarters have all been designed for maximum dramatic impact.

Up until this point, Drake has always looked out primarily for himself. He knows he's destined for great things, he's just never been sure what those great things are. He thought he might find his purpose in playing superhero for kids around the world in the movies, or being an actual superhero to save the city and claim the glory. **After meeting Gosalyn, he's starting to realize that if he can make a difference in this one girl's life, that may be enough.**

Not that Gosalyn will make it easy. Drake struggles to parent and contain fiercely independent Gosalyn. Ever the actor, Drake throws himself fully into the role of "father". Just because he has *zero* parenting experience doesn't mean that he can't rise to the occasion. "I mean, I have no superheroing experience either, and look how great I am at it!" He's even managed to channel some of her boundless energy and determination into crimefighting!

But with Gosalyn constantly testing his naïve notions of what being a "dad" means, he'll have to put aside his ego and what he wants to figure out what she needs. **He's spent most of his life acting:** acting like a hero, now acting like a father. It's time for him to step up and *actually* become those things.



LAUNCHPAD McQUACK AKA WINGWING? (He's working on it...) (30s) The Heart. Lovable, earnest, impossibly dumb. Launchpad McQuack meets Launchpad McQuack.

Drake's crash-happy best friend from Duckburg is living the dream as both a member of Drake's family and as Darkwing Duck's sidekick and pilot. Having grown up on the rough and tumble streets of St. Canard, optimistic Launchpad is eager to help Drake clean up this town in the most heroic way possible. He's the world's BIGGEST Darkwing Duck fan and has even built a fully functioning THUNDERQUACK airplane in the shape of Darkwing's head as a fan project on the side. With a heart as big as his insurance premium, Launchpad often serves as Drake's conscience when the going gets tough; his dim naiveté actually gives him a strong sense of right and wrong.

As excited as LP is to be Darkwing's sidekick, he's EVEN MORE excited to be a member of Drake's family. After years of being a part of Scrooge McDuck's unconventional extended family, Launchpad is eager to follow in his boss' footsteps as Gosalyn's "Uncle Launchpad". Based on what he's seen of Scrooge and Donald, LP's got all the qualifications: he cares for his family no matter what and is constantly getting them out of dangerous situations that he put them into in the first place!

He does *not* take that responsibility lightly. While Drake and Gosalyn believe they're only playing at "family," this isn't an act for Launchpad. He's the only one who believes the three of them actually can be a family. **As such, he's constantly putting more importance on their home lives than their superheroic escapades**, planning family outings, mingling with the neighbors, and volunteering at Gosalyn's school.

Launchpad is the *consummate sidekick* in that he supports everyone on the family. He serves as a friend and confidant to Drake. He's also a surrogate big brother to Gosalyn, acting as both a sympathetic ear and a shoulder to cry on. Although he may constantly blow the Thunderquack apart, Launchpad is the glue that holds the Mallard family together.

HONKER MUDDLEFOOT (12) Gosalyn's next door neighbor, classmate, and best friend. Socially anxious Honker is just trying to survive school, keep a low profile to avoid getting bullied, and live an unremarkable life. He maybe shouldn't have befriended devil-may-care Gosalyn when she stepped in and saved him from getting beat up on her first day at school.

In his desire to avoid trouble, Honker has become HYPER-observant and a keen detective: he knows everything that's going on both at school and in the neighborhood. That's how he managed to discover The Mallards' secret identities within 24 hours of them moving in. He's promised to keep their secret, both out of loyalty to Gosalyn and to prevent a full-scale supervillain invasion of his neighborhood. As meticulous as Gosalyn is reckless, Honker helps show Gosalyn that maybe having close friends aren't always a burden while she teaches him how to stick up for himself. Drake actually sees a lot of his younger self in frequently bullied Honker, and Honker's keen skills of observation prove to be a valuable asset in the team's investigations. Honker never thought his nervous attention to detail could be a force for good and is eager to help out other little guys like himself.

HERB AND BINKY MUDDLEFOOT (30s) The Friendly, Functional, Instagram-Perfect Family Next Door. Man, do they drive Drake nuts..

Honker's parents lead the platonic ideal of a modern family life. Perfect home, perfect jobs, perfect lives, camp-outs on the weekends, family dinner every Sunday, always smiling and having a great time in each others' company. HOW IN THE WORLD ARE THE MALLARDS SUPPOSED TO COMPETE?! "Stay-at-home" super-mom Binky volunteers on so many of Honker's school boards, teams, and coalitions that she might as well have a full-time job. And overly friendly personal space violator Herb is constantly reaching out to Drake "acting all neighborly" and fuelling Drake's competitive desire to keep up with the Muddlefoots. It's bad enough that Herb threatens Drake's confidence in his parenting skills; Herb is also an upstanding Detective in the SCPDSCD (St. Canard Police Department SuperCrime Division) leading the investigation on the masked menace known as Darkwing Duck! Drake and Herb are like Walter White and his brother-in-law Hank on *Breaking Bad*, with the two bonding on a parenting level while Drake tries to hide his secret identity.

NEGADUCK (50s) Dangerously egomaniacal, bitterly jealous, with a passion for pain and an extensive collection of "antique" chainsaws- the rustier, the better.

Remember that superhero TV show we said Drake loved so much as a kid? Self-centered Jim Starling was the star of that show. And he's bitterly jealous that Drake has "stolen" his mantle and is becoming a bigger deal than he ever was has. Well, if Drake can be a real hero, then Jim can become a *real villain*. Now wearing a twisted variation of his original costume, Jim's made it his life's mission to humiliate and hurt Darkwing both emotionally and very, *very* physically. His penchant for over-the-top, cartoonishly evil plots of pain may meet their match in Drake's cartoonishly high tolerance for pain. And he is *determined* to cause Darkwing pain both on a grand and *very* petty scale! Trap him in an iron maiden full of eels! Ruin his reputation by posing as Darkwing and sticking up the Policeman's Ball! CHANGE ALL OF HIS ONLINE PASSWORDS TO CAUSE HIM ENDLESS CONFUSION AND FRUSTRATION! Negaduck's attacks may seem psychotically random from a distance, but Negaduck knows Darkwing as well as he knows himself, and he knows how to expose all his weaknesses. Negaduck's constantly working behind the scenes, sewing chaos and recruiting villains to his cause to enact his ultimate vengeance.

Jim is a dark mirror of Drake's ego unchecked. With no family or friends to ground him, Jim lost sight of what it is to be a hero long ago, and doesn't care about anyone but himself and his

reputation. That makes him especially dangerous because **Negaduck** has nothing to lose: "It's a shame that Drakey just acquired some love ones. I'll have to exploit them just right."



TO AID IN HIS ULTIMATE SCHEME, Negaduck will recruit both updates of classic villains (Electro-revolutionary freedom fighter for appliances MEGAVOLT, social media celeb/fast-talking fluid foe THE LIQUIDATOR) and new (duly elected official of the undead THE NIGHT MAYOR, sinister speedster for hire QUICK BUCK), etc. Unfortunately for the Mallards, each villain will test their mettle and their bonds as a family. *Unfortunately for Negaduck*, villains are people, too. And in a town crowded with competition, the bad guys tend to develop their own interpersonal problems. Competing baddies Double Take and Twin Gemini are constantly squabbling over who gets to rob the Second National Bank. And you can't put CatMandu and the Dog-Goblin on the same villain team! They'll fight like...well, you know... But every villain in St. Canard can bond over one important thing: THEIR MUTUAL HATRED OF DARKWING DUCK.

WHEN (AND WHERE) THERE'S TROUBLE...

Having Drake and Gosalyn share the spotlight this time around allows us to focus on episodes anchored around two major locations: **CRIMEFIGHTING IN THE CITY** and **SURVIVAL AT SCHOOL**. Every episode can focus on one or both of these kinds of stories, with the kids participating in solving a case or the adults getting pulled into the action at school.



THE CITY OF ST. CANARD is *not* like every other comic book city, where there are a dozen Avengers to throw at any given threat. It's just Darkwing and family against a city whose population is 49% villain. While the proliferation of villains can be a fun source of comedy (competing with each other to see who gets to be Darkwing's official "archnemesis," struggling to find a gimmick that hasn't already been taken, etc.), each case *must* serve to somehow illuminate a grounded family problem. It's truly the Mallards against the world as they face both updates of original *Darkwing Duck* villains and new threats. **The baddies reflect, emphasize, or complicate whatever familial issues the Mallards have at home**, as each new criminal threatens both the city and our heroes' ability to be a normal family.



SHELTON JUNIOR HIGH is not your ordinary school. Being the new kid is dangerous enough, but because this is St. Canard, Gosalyn and Honker share classes with kids who are either related to villains or are bad guys themselves. Even those who aren't have had their lives affected in some weird way by forces villainous, science-fictional, or supernatural. The odd homeschooled kids who just enrolled are from a family of Sorcerer Supremes (or is that "Sorcerers Supreme?"). There's an evil lizard-man who is obviously posing as a child to gain information for the upcoming reptile uprising, but would still like to be one of the "cool kids". Drake maybe wouldn't push Gosalyn to "make friends like a normal kid" if she knew villain Megavolt's son had a crush on her. Like *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, **these stories focus on the kids both literally and figuratively "surviving high school" with kids who are also struggling to figure out their identities** (or secret identities, as the case may be).

HOW IT'S DIFFERENT FROM THE ORIGINAL SERIES

In updating this beloved classic series, we plan to use the same ethos we used to update *DuckTales*: **making it the best version of the show you think you remember**. While the original series garners much love for being a stylish, superheroic family show with heart, it leaned **HEAVILY** on parody and broad slapstick comedy. The new series must be both a commentary on *contemporary* superhero tropes while also being a fun example of the genre. While many remember the core of the series to be the touching story of a father and daughter who happened to fight crime, most of that emotional resonance was established in the pilot. Subsequent episodes played up rote "parent/child" stories present in most 90s series or ignored the relationship all together in favor of pop culture satire.

A reboot presents an opportunity to mine the basic premise with a contemporary spin, by **making Gosalyn and Drake full co-leads and promoting Gosalyn to a full-time hero.**

ORIGINAL SERIES	NEW SERIES
Superhero Parody	Superhero Comedy with Character-Based Humor
Relies heavily on Slapstick	Comedic action set pieces that are as funny as they are thrilling
Darkwing is the lead with Gosalyn as a side character	Darkwing and Gosalyn are co-leads, with Gosalyn serving as the POV character
Drake as Bumbling but Authoritative Dad keeping Gosalyn out of Danger	Drake as Immature but well-meaning Millennial Velcro-Parent Training Gosalyn for the Scary World
Gosalyn as Troublemaking Tomboy Obstacle	Gosalyn as Independent Lead Character Finding her Place in an Adoptive Family
Launchpad as Broad Comic Relief Sidekick	Launchpad as the Heart of the Family
Rote 90s style “father and daughter” lessons	Exploration of a Unique Family Grounded in Characters and Reality
Self-contained Villain of the Week	Self-contained Episodes with light serialization

HOW IT'S DIFFERENT FROM DUCKTALES (2017)

Part of the appeal of this expansion of *DuckTales* is the ability to further develop the world of the Disney Ducks, allowing plenty of room for overlap, character crossovers, and the like. But the most exciting opportunity for a *Darkwing Duck* series is to tell all the stories that *DuckTales* can't.

DUCKTALES (2017)	DARKWING DUCK (NEW SERIES)
Large Main Ensemble Explores Multiple Varied Relationships	Small Main Cast Allows for Deeper Exploration of Familial Relationships (specifically Father/Daughter)
Finding Your Place in a Large Family	Building an Adoptive Family Out of Disparate Parts
Globetrotting Expeditions Takes You to Exotic Locales	City-Based Crime Fighting Builds Out Of Kid Relatable Locations (Neighborhood, School, etc)
Wealthy Family on Treasure Hunting Adventures	Working Class Family Protecting Their City from Villainy
Willy Wonka-esque Wish fulfillment Leads to Character Growth	More kid-relatable problems and situations are heightened by Fantastic Superheroics
Earthy Adventure Locales	Bright, Pop-inspired Neon-Tinged Urban Adventure
Grounded, Anime-inspired Action	Graphic, Cartoonier action inspired by <i>Looney Tunes</i> with a contemporary Pop-Punk Edge
Golden Age Pulp Adventure a la <i>Indiana Jones</i>	Silver Age Superheroics a la <i>Batman</i>

Ultimately, under all the capes and crime fighting and secret identities and crazy villians, Darkwing Duck is a show about coming together to build a family, whether you're actually related or not. Over the course of the series, our heroes will learn that family are the people you fight side-by-side with, you fight against, and you fight for, no matter how dangerous things get.
